

honor your contract. Here's the contract. You told me it was 10, you told me it was 15, you told me it was 20 percent. You can't change it.

Under existing law, issuers can change the contract terms in the middle of the game. And what do they leave consumers with? As we know, we have a constricting credit, with nothing but to pay the higher interest rate.

You know, I want to tell the American people that right now, credit card companies can issue cards to 14-, 15-, 16-year-olds that are not emancipated. Now, who's going to pay those credit card bills? Mommy, Daddy, that's who's going to pay them. We all know that. Who's going to leave their kids out there? No one is. All good parents are going to say, well, that's my child, my son. I'm responsible for my daughter. I'm responsible. And the credit card companies know it. They know it. I don't know this to be a fact, but I'm sure they're checking into just what your credit ability is, and they say, well, Daddy can pay. Mother can pay. Let's give the child.

And listen, I want to make one thing clear. Even though the bill says 18, you know, emancipation, come on. In America, what 18-year-old is emancipated? You're not emancipated. They're 19, 20, 21, 22, and nobody throws their kids out of the house. Everybody keeps them and cherishes them and nurtures them and continues. Credit card companies know that, too, when they're issuing credit cards.

College students, you're paying tuition. You're paying for their room and board. You're paying for their health care. You're paying for their clothes, and then they send them a credit card to undermine your ability to give your child a college education.

And listen, everywhere you go in America, you want to buy clothes? Take a credit card. You want to fix your car? Got a credit card for you. Want to go buy a refrigerator? Take it on a credit card. Everybody offers you. So what we have is an economy that's on credit card basis. So all we're saying is, hey, since this has been promoted so much, let's make sure that we do this.

And listen, I remember when I didn't make \$174,000 as a Member of Congress. I remember when I lived paycheck to paycheck. I remember when the credit card companies would increase the interest rate or tell me, Mr. GUTIERREZ, through no fault of your own, we're not going to extend you any more credit. Pay down your bill at this credit interest rate higher than the one you took it out. I remember. Maybe we should all go back to remembering when things weren't so rosy in our own personal lives in terms of being Members of Congress and put ourselves in the position of people who live paycheck to paycheck. If we do that tomorrow, I think what we're going to do is we're going to stand on the side of consumers.

As Mr. BACHUS says, consumers are angry. The American public is frus-

trated. They're outraged by what credit card companies are doing.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 627, the Credit Cardholders Bill of Rights Act.

I'd like to thank Congresswoman MALONEY for her work on this issue. She has been a longtime champion of credit card reform and I wholeheartedly support her efforts.

The Credit Cardholders Bill of Rights Act could not be more timely. The constant stress of mounting bills in the face of skyrocketing unemployment and a foreclosure epidemic has American families caught between a rock and a bigger rock.

More and more working families have been forced to rely on credit cards to cover basic living expenses. The least we can do is make sure the credit card issuers are fair, open, and honest about rates and terms.

For decades, credit card companies have been allowed to operate under special rules that, under any other circumstances, would be considered outlandish.

Take for instance the credit card industry's ability to raise an unsuspecting cardholder's interest rate because he was one day late paying a different card belonging to a different company. Where else can creditors suddenly change the rules in the middle of a game?

It's like an umpire deciding that a batter hit by a pitch can take two bases instead of one in the middle of a baseball game. Consumers are playing an unfair ball game and there's no way to win.

Cardholders continue to pay millions of dollars in hidden charges, outrageous late fees, and unpredictable interest rates.

Despite the fact that most consumers make monthly payments that are more than the minimum required, cardholders cannot seem to make a dent on the average credit card debt of \$8,600.

There's a term for such one-sided contracts: UNCONSCIONABLE. And that's exactly what these credit card agreements are.

In the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, I am certain that the passage of the Credit Cardholders Bill of Rights Act is simply the "right thing to do."

Provisions in the bill will level the playing field for consumers by barring credit card companies from raising interest rates without proper and timely notification.

These much-needed changes are long overdue and will help struggling debtors from sinking deeper in a financial hole.

I urge my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, to join in fixing the inequities in the credit card industry by supporting this vital legislation.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the previous order of the House, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. MARKEY of Colorado) having assumed the chair, Mr. CUELLAR, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 627) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to establish fair and transparent practices relating to the extension of credit under an open end

consumer credit plan, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 627, CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111-92) on the resolution (H. Res. 379) providing for further consideration of the bill (H.R. 627) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to establish fair and transparent practices relating to the extension of credit under an open end consumer credit plan, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House of Representatives to the Concurrent Resolution (S. Con. Res. 13) entitled "Concurrent Resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014."

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER TO ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE RECORDS OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 2702, and the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair announces the Speaker's reappointment of the following member on the part of the House to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress:

Mr. Joseph Cooper, Baltimore, Maryland

COMMUNICATION FROM THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JOHN A. BOEHNER, Republican Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 3, 2009.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: Pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 2702, I am pleased to re-appoint Mr. Jeffrey W. Thomas of Ohio to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress. Mr. Thomas has expressed interest in serving in this capacity and I am pleased to fulfill his request.

Sincerely,

JOHN BOEHNER,
Republican Leader.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6913, and the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China:

Mr. LEVIN, Michigan, Co-Chairman
Ms. KAPTUR, Ohio
Mr. HONDA, California
Mr. WALZ, Minnesota
Mr. WU, Oregon
Mr. SMITH, New Jersey
Mr. MANZULLO, Illinois
Mr. ROYCE, California
Mr. PITTS, Pennsylvania

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 3, 2009.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: Pursuant to Section 333(a)(2) of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-229), I am pleased to appoint Mr. Danny Vargas of Herndon, Virginia as a voting member of the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of the American Latino.

Dr. Aida Levitan of Key Biscayne, Florida and Mrs. Rosa J. Correa of Bridgeport, Connecticut were previously appointed and shall remain voting members.

Mr. Vargas has expressed interest in serving in this capacity and I am pleased to fulfill the request.

Sincerely,

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Republican Leader.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1830

NEVER AGAIN: WHAT WE DO DOES MATTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, a few weeks ago, I came to

this House floor to address my colleagues and bring to their attention the danger that Iran poses to Israel. I shared with my colleagues some of the things that the Iranian leader had said about Israel to illustrate the seriousness of the threat.

Madam Speaker, the Iranian President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has again spoken. Last week, at the opening day of the United Nations Anti-Racism Conference, the Iranian President was given a platform on which to spread racist and hateful views. In his address to the conference, he called Israel "the most cruel and racist regime," said that Zionism "is a paragon of racism," and said the creation of Israel was founded on "the pretext of Jewish sufferings and the ambiguous and dubious question of the Holocaust."

While the Iranian leader's comments are disturbing in any context, it is even more troublesome that he would question the Holocaust on the day before we celebrated the Holocaust Remembrance.

It is hard to understand how the United Nations and so many other countries fail to take the Iranian threat seriously. It is more than ironic that the U.N. would give one who has denied the Holocaust and advocated for the destruction of Israel the opportunity to speak at a conference convened to combat hatred and racism.

Although the United States and a few countries had the sense to boycott the summit and thereby refuse to lend credibility to the conference and speakers like Ahmadinejad, too many nations continue to act with complacency.

Last Thursday, our Nation's leaders gathered in our Rotunda here in the Capitol for the National Commemoration of the Day of Remembrance to remember the 6 million Jews who were murdered in the Holocaust. The theme of this year's events was, "Never Again: What You Do Matters." That theme is a message for all of us to take very seriously.

When we say "never again," we need to think about the current threats to peace and security and take appropriate action to prevent senseless violence. Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons is an existential threat to the people of Israel and a grave danger to the rest of the world.

Madam Speaker, the things we do do matter. It is time for us to join together and confront this Iranian threat.

Today, Israel celebrates its 61st anniversary of its independence; again, a day in which we ought to remember the threat that still remains. Congress can take action to address this threat by approving H.R. 1327, the Iran Sanctions Enabling Act, and H.R. 1985, the Iran Diplomatic Enhancement Act.

The Iran Sanctions Enabling Act gives States and local governments the authority to divest their assets from any company that invests \$20 million

or more in Iran's energy sector. The other piece of legislation, H.R. 1985, would sanction any entity engaged in activities that contribute to Iran's ability to import gasoline or fine petroleum.

I am a sponsor of these bills, and I believe that sanctions will increase pressure on the Iranian regime to change course and abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

The Days of Remembrance call us to soberly evaluate the changes to peace we face and take swift action as best we can to address them.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to quickly approve the Iran Sanctions Enabling Act and the Iran Diplomatic Enhancement Act. "Never again: What we do does matter."

A KINDER, GENTLER MARXISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, recently I read an article by Gene Edward Veith entitled, "A Kinder, Gentler Marxism."

He begins his comments by saying, "Barack Obama is not a socialist, explained Eric Etheredge of The New York Times, he is a 'social democrat.'" The administration's attempt to control private companies and the free market should not alarm us, according to Etheredge and other pundits. European nations do this all the time. It is simply an application of the European political and economic theory known as "social democracy."

We were promised several things by our President during his campaign. He promised us government reform, a renewed and repaired economy, and more ethical business practices. And he did all this as we watched our economy crash.

After these 100 days in office, we need to illuminate the path that this administration is actually taking us down. It could be the path that leads us from limited government, that stimulates our economy naturally, to a government mostly aligned with social democracy like the social economies of Western Europe, with massive taxes and chronic high unemployment.

An objective definition of social democracy from Merriam-Webster's online dictionary is as follows: "A political movement advocating a gradual and peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism by democratic means." Or a second definition, "A democratic welfare state that incorporates both capitalist and socialist practices."

So this political and economic system either moves from capitalism to socialism or combines both capitalism and socialism to form a welfare state. We need to know more.

Here is the first paragraph from the Encyclopedia Britannica about social